United Nations S/RES/1531 (2004)

Security Council

Distr.: General
12 March 2004

Resolution 1531 (2004)

Adopted by the Security Council at its 4924th meeting, on 12 March 2004

The Security Council,

Reaffirming all its previous resolutions and statements pertaining to the situation between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and the requirements contained therein, including in particular resolution 1507 (2003) of 12 September 2003,

Reiterating its support for the peace process and its unwaivering commitment, including through the role played by the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), to the full and expeditious implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed by the Governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea (hereinafter referred to as "the parties") on 12 December 2000 and the preceding Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities of 18 June 2000 (S/2000/1183 and S/2000/601, respectively, hereinafter referred to as the "Algiers Agreements"), and the delimitation decision by the Boundary Commission of 13 April 2002 (S/2002/423), embraced by the parties as final and binding in accordance with the Algiers Agreements,

Noting with concern the continuing impasse in the peace process, mainly due to the lack of progress in the demarcation of the border,

Taking note with concern of the Twelfth report on the work of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission of 27 February 2004, in particular its conclusion that under the present circumstances the Commission is unable to progress with demarcation activities,

Expressing its concern about Ethiopia's rejection of significant parts of the Boundary Commission's decision, and its current lack of cooperation with the Boundary Commission,

Expressing disappointment also about Eritrea's refusal at present to engage with the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Ethiopia and Eritrea,

Emphasizing that cooperation with the Special Envoy offers both parties a concrete opportunity to move the peace process forward,

Recognizing the increasing demand for United Nations peacekeeping and resources from the international community for peacekeeping and peace-building

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purposes, and *recalling* the additional operational costs due to the delays in the demarcation process,

Expressing its support for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and for UNMEE,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General (S/2004/180), and *fully supporting* the observations made therein,

1. *Decides* to extend the mandate of UNMEE at the troop and military observer levels authorized by its resolution 1320 (2000) of 15 September 2000, until 15 September 2004;

2. *Strongly urges* the parties once again to cooperate fully and expeditiously with UNMEE in the implementation of its mandate, and to step up its efforts to ensure the security of all UNMEE staff, and *reiterates in the strongest terms* its demand that the parties allow UNMEE full freedom of movement and remove with immediate effect and without preconditions any and all restrictions on, and impediments to the work of, UNMEE and its staff in the discharge of their mandate;

3. *Stresses* that the primary responsibility for implementation of the Algiers Agreements and the decision of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission lies with both parties;

4. *Calls on* the parties to cooperate fully and promptly with the Boundary Commission, and to create the necessary conditions for demarcation to proceed expeditiously, including through the unequivocal restating of Ethiopia's acceptance of the Boundary Commission's decision, the appointment by Ethiopia of field liaison officers, and the payment of its dues to the Boundary Commission;

5. *Reaffirms* the crucial importance of a political dialogue between the two countries for the completion of the peace process and the consolidation of progress achieved so far, and *urges* both parties to normalize their relations, including through confidence-building measures, and to refrain from any threat or use of force against each other;

6. *Reiterates* its support for the initiative of the Secretary-General to exercise his good offices by appointing a Special Envoy, in order to facilitate the implementation of the Algiers Agreements, the decision of the Boundary Commission, and the relevant resolutions and decisions of the Security Council, and to encourage the normalization of diplomatic relations between the two countries, and *emphasizes* that this appointment does not constitute an alternative mechanism;

7. *Expresses* its full support for the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Ethiopia and Eritrea, Lloyd Axworthy, *stresses* that the Special Envoy enjoys the unanimous support of the witnesses to the Algiers Agreements, namely the United Nations, the United States of America, Algeria, the African Union, and the European Union, and *urges* both parties, in particular the government of Eritrea, to engage constructively and without further delay with the Special Envoy;

8. *Urges* both parties once again to establish expeditiously a direct high-altitude flight route between Asmara and Addis Ababa to relieve the unnecessary additional cost to UNMEE and member States;

9. *Decides* to monitor closely the steps taken by the parties in the implementation of their commitments under the Algiers Agreements, including through the Boundary Commission, and to review any implications for UNMEE;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to monitor the situation closely and to keep under review the mission's effectiveness, and to adjust and streamline the mission's operations as needed, taking into account also the mandate of UNMEE as outlined in paragraph 2 of resolution 1320 (2000);

11. *Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter.